

Official Minutes for Webb County Commissioners Court Meeting

Monday, December 11, 2006 at 1:00 PM
and continuing Tuesday, December 12, 2006 at 1:00 PM
(APPROVED JANUARY 09, 2007)

Item No. 1

Call to order by Cmr. Judith Gutierrez

Let it be remembered that a regular meeting of the Webb County Commissioners Court was held at 1:00 p.m. at the regular meeting place with the following members present to wit:

Frank Sciaraffa	Commissioner, Pct. 1
Judith Gutierrez	Commissioner, Pct. 2
Jerry Garza	Commissioner, Pct. 3
Cindy Cortez-Brunner	Commissioner, Pct. 4

Absent:

Louis H. Bruni County Judge

Thus constituting a quorum, the Commissioners Court proceeded to act upon the Agenda as posted in the meeting notice of the 8th of December 2006. Present also were Mrs. Imelda Diaz, Deputy County Clerk representing Mrs. Margie Ramirez Ibarra, Ex-officio Clerk of the Commissioners Court, various officers and others interested in the business of the Court.

Item No. 2

Roll Call – Margie Ramirez Ibarra, Webb County Clerk

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve Judge Louis H. Bruni from being absent. Cmr. Brunner seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Cmr. Gutierrez wished Judge Bruni a fast recovery. She mentioned that this would be the Court's last meeting and hopes Judge Bruni comes back soon.

Item No. 3

Pledge of Allegiance – Led by All

Item No. 4

Approval of minutes – November 27, 2006

Cmr. Garza motioned to approve minutes. Cmr. Sciaraffa seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 5

Approval of bills, payroll and monthly reports

Mr. Rafael Perez explained the report represented the months of October and November. Mr. Perez stated that the fund balance was at \$11,474,225.00 which was a little more than 16.8%.

Cmr. Gutierrez stated that the Court's commitment was to maintain a fund balance of 15% and hopes it stays that way.

Mr. Perez stated that in last commissioner's court meeting there was a line item to clear the deficit for the Water Utility; therefore, in addition to the Water Utility, the Employee Health fund is starting at zero. He mentioned that the Adult Probation Department started a deficit fund balance; however, he stated that this was a two year grant and still have remedy to end in a positive balance. He stated that collections in the sales tax are above \$69,642.00 from last year.

Cmr. Gutierrez congratulated the Auditor's office for the report. She asked if the accounts from last fiscal year that were in the red had been settled. Mr. Perez stated that they would generate a report and would be included with the next report.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approved item as submitted. Cmr. Brunner seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 6 Communications

Cmr. Sciaraffa wished Judge Bruni a speedy recovery and thanked Judge Bruni, Cmr. Gutierrez, and Cmr. Brunner for everything that they have done for the community. He also welcomed the students from LBJ, the little boxers from Los Laredo Boxing Club, and all veterans.

Cmr. Garza mentioned that it had been a pleasure working with all three of the members of the Court. He stated that they have all worked very hard through some difficult issues and also wished Judge Bruni a speedy recovery.

Cmr. Brunner wished Judge Bruni a speedy recovery. She stated that this would be her last meeting and that it had been an honor to serve in the court and was very confident that the next court would do a great job. She stated that she believes that the county is fortunate to have a team of department heads. She thanked her family and constituents for all their love and support. She mentioned that it was a challenging experience; however, she stated that she plans to run again. She mentioned that she would like to leave everyone with a quote which read: "Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments it takes our breaths away".

Cmr. Gutierrez stated that she believes that the 16 years that she has served on the Court have been a wonderful experience. She stated that she started her services for Webb County in 1987 when it was a very difficult Court. She stated that she has always worked very hard to improve the quality of life for the residence of Pct 2 especially for the people in the Colonias. She thanked members of commissioners court and past commissioners courts. Cmr. Gutierrez mentioned that she leaves Pct 2 in capable hands and thanked Rosaura "Wawi" Tijerina. She mentioned that her leaving her position and her precinct better than the way she found it was a great way for her to be remembered as. She thanked all dept heads and the residence of Pct. 2.

Item No. 7. Public Comment-This section provides the public the opportunity to address the Commissioners Court on any items on the Agenda. Members of the public wishing to participate must complete a Witness Card specifying which agenda item they wish to comment on. Each public member will be allowed a total of three (3) minutes within which to make any/all public comments.

1st witness card - Minister Tony Gamboa (Casa de Oracion)

Ms. Gamboa invited the Court, Webb County employees, and all the citizens of Webb County to a Christmas celebration on Thursday, December 28, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. at the Laredo Civic Center. She stated that they wanted to present the true meaning of Christmas. She stated that Casa de Oraciones continuously has prayer services and all court members have always been in their prayers for God's love, wisdom, peace, guidance, protection, and blessings for the services that they have given to Webb County.

2nd witness card - Margie Ramirez Ibarra (Webb County Clerk)

Mrs. Ibarra introduced Mrs. Ana Morales, Chief Deputy and Mr. Arturo Santos, Vital Statistics, and stated that she was very proud of her staff because for the first time they have won a Five Star Award for being up to date in Vital Statistics. Cmr. Sciaraffa congratulated Mrs. Ibarra and her staff. Cmr. Gutierrez congratulated Mrs. Ibarra and her staff.

3rd witness card - Daniel Castillon (Executive Director of Border Region)

Mr. Castillon stated that on August and September he had been to the Court to convey to them what Border Region does. He stated that he came with two concerns which were the transporting of mentally ill individuals who are in a crisis and need to be transported to San Antonio and to ask for a local match of \$250,000. He mentioned that consequently to his concerns the Court allocated three full time peace officers to do the transporting 24 hours a day and they allotted \$200,000 to Border Region. He stated that it has been about 90 days since the implementation and he wanted to give the Court a status report. He praised the Court for their decision and Constable Reyes' staff as well because they have been courteous, polite, responded in a timely manner when needed, and they treat his employees and the people that they service very well. He stated to the Court that the decisions made were very intelligent because overall everyone is happy.

Cmr. Gutierrez thanked Mr. Castillon and stated that she was glad that the feedback was positive. Mr. Castillon wished everyone Happy Holidays and wished the Commissioners the best in whatever endeavor they undertake.

4th witness card - Marcel Notzon

Mr. Notzon stated that last time he was at the Court was on the Camino Colombia issue; however, he stated that he has received two checks from the Benavides Families of \$4457.85. He stated that he noticed that the item was not on the agenda but he wanted to address the Court on this matter. He stated that he had two checks to either tender to the Attorneys or to the Court to have this matter settled. Cmr. Gutierrez asked the County Attorney to give the Court direction to whom this money was to be given to. Mr. Nathan Bratton, County Attorney's Office, stated to the Tax Attorney.

5th witness card - Mr. Sergio Martinez

Mr. Martinez stated that he was before the Court to address the matter that came out on the newspaper on staffing empty centers. He told the Court that he hoped that the Court does not commit another blunder like it was done on Penitas West where people were hired and paid by the County two or three months before the center was completed. He asked Cmr. Garza and Cmr. Sciaraffa to think of the taxpayers before making any decisions. He stated that traditionally it has been that when a community center is built under a respective precinct it is the Commissioner for that precinct who will staff or recommend to staff and that he would respect that come January 01, 2007.

6th witness card - Mr. Jesus Sanchez

Mr. Sanchez stated that this time was not appropriate to hire some positions for the community centers. He stated that some positions had reason for approval; however, these centers were going to be built until a year or maybe even more and what were the people going to be doing all this time. He stated that in the near future Cmr. Gutierrez would run for office again and people were going to remember what she did. He

mentioned that in the past, Commissioners used to have only one secretary but ever since they moved from the Billy Hall Building some of them have more than one staff members.

8th witness card - Richard A. Rossell

Mr. Rossell stated that there was excitement in the air among veterans because this was a December to remember. He stated that he admires the Court for sticking to their guns and letting their heart dominate their head. He mentioned that they are Veterans regardless of the branch of service they served on and they are all a family because all gave some and some gave all. He stated that the museum was going to be a Veteran's museum for past, present, and future veterans. Mr. Rossell thanked the court for all their work.

9th witness card - Jose Luis Munoz

Mr. Munoz stated that he was overwhelmed of listening to all the complaints of what the Commissioners were doing before leaving their office. He stated that he agrees with all the Commissioner's Court decisions in every aspect because it was their obligation to complete their term and what they started. He stated that they are all expecting to have the museum. He stated that the young generation fighting in Iraq deserved admiration and respect for a job well done to keep peace in this great nation. He mentioned that they deserve to have something to come home to and unfortunately some will not come back home; however, they would be remembered when the museum is built. He thanked Cmr. Gutierrez for helping veterans in many ways and the Commissioner's Court. He congratulated Mr. Villarreal, Cmr. Sciaraffa, and Mr. Garza and all those who participated in some meeting with the Laredo Veteran's Coalition. He mentioned to the Commissioners and Judge Bruni to leave with a chin up and that they would be leaving with flying colors in their hearts.

10th witness card - Dr. Hector Farias (Laredo Veteran's Coalition)

Mr. Farias asked all veterans to stand. He stated that he was privileged to serve with veterans and proud of his dear friend Jose Luis Munoz that in spite of health issues when it comes to veterans he is always there. He stated that this being the last meeting everyone comes to thank the Court; however, he stated that there will always be the nay sayers that come to criticize but should rather come and thank the Court for the positions that the Court has taken on many issues. He stated that he had a great deal of appreciation to Carlos Villarreal and the court for the implementation of Rail District. He stated that on the issues of Veterans the coalition would not have gotten started without the help of Cmr. Gutierrez and the late Mike Urdiales. He stated that they have always had support of Precinct 4, Cmr. Garza, and Cmr. Sciaraffa. He mentioned that he was proud that more young men from Laredo go to the Marine Corps than any other city in this country. He stated that it was so appropriate that the Court comes together to do all this just four days after the anniversary of Pearl Harbor.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to move up items 14, 15, and 16. Cmr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 14. Discussion and possible action to name the Veteran's Museum located at 410 San Bernardo the "Juan Fransisco Farias Veterans Museum," approve Real Estate Sales Contract, and Closing and any other matters incident thereto.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Gutierrez seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Comr. Gutierrez thanked everyone that was there to support the item. She stated that things can't be stopped just because some of them were leaving office. She said that they would keep working till the last day that they were in office.

Item No. 15. Discussion and possible action to designate an additional One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) from Webb County Certificates of Obligation Bond Series 2006, Fund 723-8103-8710-2 to the Veteran's Museum and finding that the County's participation in this project is in the best interest of the public and serves a public purpose and any other matters incident thereto.

Comr. Sciaraffa motioned to approved item as submitted. Comr. Gutierrez seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 16. Discussion and possible action to designate Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) from Webb County Certificates of Obligation Bond Series 2006, Fund 723-8103-8710-2 to the Domestic Violence Shelter Casa de Misericordia Park Project and finding that the County's participation in this project is in the best interest of the public and serves a public purpose and any other matters incident thereto.

Comr. Brunner motioned to approve item as submitted. Comr. Sciaraffa seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Sister Rosemary Welch was proud to announce that their program started 8 years ago. She thanked the Court for their support and help in completing the project and offered special thanks to Comr. Gutierrez and Comr. Brunner who would soon be leaving office. She stated that Comr. Sciaraffa and Comr. Garza would be in their prayers since they would remain in office.

Item No. 20. Discussion and possible action to retain the services of Dr. Corinne E. Stern, D.O. as Webb County Medical Examiner with a salary of \$160,000.00; to effect necessary line item transfers from Fund 001-1400-Autopsies to Fund 001-1400- 2070 Medical Examiner and Morgue; to authorize the County Auditor to make any necessary line item transfers for the Medical Examiner and Morgue Operations; and, to authorize the County Judge to execute any and all relevant documents.

Mr. Carlos Villarreal, Executive Administrator, stated that they have followed the Court's directive and have spoken to Dr. Stern extensively and to the different entities where she has worked. He explained that the way the situation was right now, the County was spending about \$330-\$340 thousand dollars alone in transportation and will continue to grow every year. He stated that the budget that they requested from Dr. Stern would be around \$175,000 hoping that they don't exceed but know that they will. He stated that she gave them a budget of \$223,000 but there are still fringe benefits and line items that need to be adjusted. He stated that they would make a recommendation so that she does not exceed \$275,000.00 and that still would be a saving just on the transportation. He stated that as a staff they unanimously make a recommendation to hire Dr. Stern as indicated at \$160,000 and a budget not to exceed \$275,000.00.

Dr. Corrine Stern stated that she is a forensic pathologist who is currently employed with the State of Alabama as a Medical Examiner. She stated that she was the Chief Medical Examiner for El Paso for the five years prior to working for the State of Alabama. She mentioned that she is the forensic pathologist for

Homeland Security and is on call just like being in the Reserve. She stated that she served at Ground Zero, served at the Space Shuttle at the Colombia Mission and spent 7 weeks in Hurricane Katrina. She stated that she is a hands on Medical Examiner and has a lot of experience in border issues. She mentioned that she feels that she could bring some expertise to this county and would like to be a part of this community.

Cmr. Gutierrez asked Dr. Stern when she would be available to start if hired. Dr. Stern stated that she would be available to start January 01, 2007.

Cmr. Gutierrez motioned to retain the services of Dr. Stern at a salary of \$160,000 and have a budget not to exceed \$275,000. Cmr. Garza seconded the motion with discussion. Cmr. Garza stated that Dr. Stern would be able to utilize the facility that the County currently has. He stated that he does not want the County to think that the Court is hiring a doctor before the morgue is built. He mentioned that Bexar County would eventually not be able to provide the services in the near future. He stated that Dr. Stern has tremendous experience and the hiring would reduce the cost for transportation and maybe even generate some revenue.

Mr. Villarreal stated that it was important that Mr. Eloy Ramirez gave Dr. Stern a tour of the existing facility and she mentioned that it was in a better condition than she thought it was going to be. Dr. Stern stated that the facility is functional and more than adequate to start working. She stated that now law enforcement could have the evidence without the fear of loss of evidence since everything is local.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

BREAK

Item No. 8. Presentation of Certificate of Achievement after attending Youth Leadership Laboratory at Prairie View A & M University of seven LBJ students.

Cmr. Sciaraffa stated that seven LBJ students were chosen from Communities in School to attend camp at Prairie View A & M University. He thanked Communities in School Program for sponsoring the seven young ladies.

The Court made presentation of awards to:

Dorothy Chavez, Maria Martinez, Nora Guajardo, Priscilla Hernandez, Marisela Trevino, Zaray Delgado, Nereida Zacarias

Item No. 11. Discussion and possible action to accept donation of vehicle from the District Attorney's office to the Los Laredo Boxing Club and any matter incident thereto.

Cmr. Sciaraffa stated that this item was cosponsored by the District Attorney's office. He thanked Mr. Joe Rubio, District Attorney, because the Club has been transporting the students with rented vans and now they would have their own van.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approved item as submitted. Cmr. Gutierrez seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 9. Discussion and possible action to fill four positions:

A. Director of La Presa Community Center (#2350)

B. Clerk (#2351)

C. Maintenance (#2325)

Comr. Sciaraffa motioned to table the Director and Clerk position. Comr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Comr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve Item 9c (Maintenance #2325) which belongs to Judge Rangel. Comr. Gutierrez seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 10. Discussion and possible action to transfer and fill Slot #2352 to Judge Liendo JP Pct. 1 and reclassify the slot title to Court Clerk.

Comr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve item as submitted. Comr. Gutierrez seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 12. Discussion and possible action to fill the following positions at the Santa Teresita Community Center effective December 11, 2006.

- A. Director of Santa Teresita Community Center (Slot #2347)**
- B. Clerk (Slot #2348)**
- C. Driver/ Maintenance (Slot #2349)**

Item No. 13. Discussion and possible action to fill the following positions effective December 11, 2006.

- A. Larga Vista Community Center: Driver/ Maintenance (Slot #2341)**
- B. Quad City Community Center: Driver/ Maintenance (Slot #2339)**
- C. Bruni Community Center: Driver/ Maintenance (Slot #2345)**

Comr. Gutierrez motioned to approve items 12 and 13. Comr. Sciaraffa seconded the motion. Comr. Gutierrez stated that these community centers have 140 days for the construction and should be ready by mid March. She stated that it was necessary to start hiring to get the necessary personnel trained and knowledgeable of the different programs. She mentioned that she has always strived to improve quality of life to people of the Colonias and will continue to work till December 31, 2006. She stated that it has taken an enormous amount of time to build these centers.

Comr. Garza stated that these centers have always been extensions to each Commissioner's office and are used as outreach to the community. He mentioned that these centers allow Commissioners to receive input on what the community needs. He stated that it has always been to extend the courtesy that the Commissioner of that specific center hire personnel since they are the ones that know what is best for the center itself. He stated that it took a while for the staff of the Buenos Aires Community Center to get knowledgeable and trained.

Comr. Brunner stated that if she knew how much training was needed, she would have hired a Director for her community center earlier.

Comr. Sciaraffa stated that it was unfair what the Laredo Morning Times printed because the Court has done so many positive things for the Community Centers. He stated that they have worked countless hours on

those community centers where they've expanded the Kid's Café and the elderly programs. He mentioned that the reason that he tabled the Director and Clerk position today was because he had a lot of calls from his constituents. He stated that what he wanted to do was to make sure that his centers were not left alone. He mentioned that he had two particular calls from two elected officials who had already interviewed two staff members for potential jobs come January 1st; however, he stated that he would bring this item back. He mentioned that he would like for Laredo Morning Times to give him more publicity when he gives two thousand of under privileged youths some gifts.

Cmr. Gutierrez stated that all these positions were already budgeted and discussed in October. She stated that she feels that the Court is right on target and moving along with these projects.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 17. Discussion and possible action to designate Fifty One Thousand Dollars (\$51,000.00) from Webb County Certificates of Obligation Bond Series 2006, Fund 723-8103-8710-2 to purchase a van and furniture for the Santa Teresita Community Center Project and finding that the County's participation in this project is in the best interest of the public and serves a public purpose and any other matters incident thereto.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Brunner seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to bring up Item 26. Cmr. Brunner seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

26. Presentation of awards to committee members in recognition of outstanding service: Rural Rail District; Planning and Zoning; Grievance; and, Community Action Agency.

Cmr. Gutierrez stated that the Planning Advisory Board would go first for the presentation of awards and called on Ms. Rhonda Tiffin, Webb County Planning Director. Ms. Tiffin called on Ms. Teresa Santos and Mr. Jorge Gonzalez. Ms. Tiffin stated that Webb County has created the Planning Advisory Board in order to enhance regulatory enforcement. She stated that this is a five member board of private citizens with no compensation for any member. She mentioned that this board has helped maintain its eligibility for the colonia improvement grants.

Cmr. Brunner thanked Mr. Jorge Gonzalez for serving on behalf of herself and the previous Commissioner David Cortez. Cmr. Gutierrez thanked Ms. Tere Santos for being her appointee. Cmr. Sciaraffa thanked Judge Bruni's appointee Ms. Erika Ramirez. Ms. Tiffin excused Ms. Ramirez because she had to leave.

Mr. Mike Kazen, CAA Director, called on Mr. Rudy Rodriguez, Ms. Sylvia Palumbo, and Ms. Idalia Lerma. He stated that the CAA was established since 1966 and these members had served for several terms already. He mentioned that in addition to providing advise these members had hands on experience and stated that we would not be able to receive over three million dollars in funds without their help and support.

Cmr. Gutierrez stated that all committee members give a lot of their time and dedication and thanked all members for their time.

Mr. Carlos Villarreal stated that there have been tremendous meetings with working with fellow colleagues in Nuevo Leon. He stated that Mr. Ramiro Barrera Jr., who was present, was an outstanding member. Cmr. Brunner thanked Mr. Barrera for his dedication for the committee. Cmr. Gutierrez thanked Mr. Hugo Flores for being her appointee and Cmr. Sciaraffa thanked Judge Bruni's appointee Mr. Fernando Garcia.

Mr. Carlos Villarreal thanked the Court and Judge Bruni for being the foresight and naming the committee. He stated that the Court had been very supportive not only financially but emotionally too. Cmr. Gutierrez thanked Mr. Tomas Rodriguez for all his input.

Mr. Eloy Ramirez, Purchasing Agent, stated that he has been a member of the Grievance committee for 19 years. He thanked the Court for recognizing him and Becky Cantu, who currently is the Chairman of the committee. He stated that serving on the committee has always been a challenge because it is not always for the employee but for the department.

Ms. Becky Cantu thanked the Court for having confidence and trust in her and all the members.

Cmr. Brunner thanked Ms. Nancy Cadena for ordering the plaques for everyone.

Item No. 27. Discussion and possible action to transfer slot# 2218 from department 1200 (Community Supervision) to department #1011, County Court at Law #2 and reclassify the slot title to Mediation Coordinator with a salary of \$2,049.86 pay period effective December 22, 2006.

Judge Jesus Garza, County Court at Law #2, stated that this item is due to an increase of 5-7 % in cases filed last year. He stated that the County Courts at Law handle a little bit more than 5000 cases put together. He mentioned that this is the reason why these courts are in need of a Mediation Coordinator and also to help handle the visiting judge's schedule.

Cmr. Gutierrez motioned to approve item as submitted and requested the Auditor's office to look into the salaries of other slots that are vacant so that they can fund the pay scale that has been set.

Judge Garza stated that they are not asking for the monies of the previous slot since that slot is being paid through grant money but the slot only to be set aside and be paid through payroll savings.

Cmr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Judge Garza thanked Cmr. Brunner and Cmr. Gutierrez for always being there for the judiciary. He also thanked Former Cmr. David Cortez.

Item No. 18. Status report on the splash park at Father McNaboe Park, on Mines Road.

Mr. Tomas Rodriguez, County Engineer, stated that the project was moving right along. He stated that all the water there would be re-circled and disinfected. He stated that the estimated time of completion would

be December 20, 2006. Cmr. Cortez thanked Mr. Rodriguez for all his work and stated that all she wanted was an updated status report on the project. She stated that this was a \$277,000 project.

Item No. 19. Discussion and possible action to approve additional funding for the construction of the Girl Scout Webb County Youth Facility from Fund 723 Series 2006 and Fund 690 Series 2002 in the amount of \$94,000.00 and any matters incident thereto.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Gutierrez seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Cmr. Brunner stated that she preferred for these monies to be used for the architect but if other costs are involved right now they can be used.

Item No. 21. Discussion and possible action to transfer slot #2166 (Executive Secretary) from Department #0300, Webb County Treasurer at the budgeted salary to Department #0600, Webb County Purchasing for the purpose of centralizing payment of utilities.

Ms. Carmen Moreno, Treasurer's Department Executive Administrator, stated that they consulted a legal opinion from the County Attorney and he advised them that this could not be done without Ms. Perales's consent and she did not consent.

Cmr. Gutierrez stated that she spoke to the County Attorney and he stated that if it was not part of her constitutional responsibilities that fall under her, then there would not be a problem for the Court to proceed. She asked if Ms. Perales did any modifications to the salary of this position. Ms. Moreno stated that no changes have been done at this point but the title.

Cmr. Garza stated that in regards to the centralization of the payment of utilities, if there was a problem on the way it is being handled right now. Mr. Villarreal stated that with discussions with Ms. Perales he understands that the individual bills are being sent to each department. He stated that he was not aware if this was brought through the Commissioner's Court.

Ms. Carmen Moreno stated that the reason this was done was because several departments especially those with grants wanted to know what were their expenses and wanted to know what was being paid out. She stated that this would be the only control the departments would have for their respective department.

Cmr. Gutierrez stated that if there is no centralization of the payments then there would be problems with the service providers. She stated that what could happen is that utilities could be disconnected which was what happened before it was centralized.

Ms. Carmen Moreno stated that that the change was approved back in June 2006. Cmr. Gutierrez stated that she does not recall the Court ever approving this change.

Comr. Garza asked if Ms. Perales has indicated that she would take back the payment of the utilities. Ms. Moreno stated that they have not discussed this issue. She stated that what they wanted was to convert this position to Clerk II because they needed help in Accounts Payable. She stated that they have an overwhelming job of invoices at about 100-350 invoices daily and with two people they are penalizing the vendors because they can't meet the deadlines. Comr. Garza stated that he understood the concern; however, by not centralizing they would be penalizing the offices if services were to get disconnected. Ms. Moreno stated that at this point no problems have been encountered since June 2006 when it was decentralized. Comr. Garza asked why the County Treasurer's office doesn't undertake the payment of the utilities if it takes just a couple of hours. Ms. Moreno asked if the department would be able to keep the slot. Comr. Garza said under his prospective, he would agree for them to keep the slot if they undertook the payment of the utilities.

Comr. Gutierrez stated that she agrees on whatever amount of work the department has and that the Court has given Ms. Perales additional slots. Ms. Moreno stated that it was unfortunate the Ms. Perales had requested an additional clerk; however, it was not given to her.

Mr. Eloy Ramirez advised the Court that Ms. Perales has been decentralizing all utilities mainly the telecommunications whether it be land lines, telecircuits, and cell phone services. He stated that some utilities have been disconnected at Penitas West because they were not aware of where to send the bills; therefore, the phone services were disconnected. He stated that he thinks it is an error to decentralize because as long as there is a purchasing department, an auditor's office, and a treasurer's office there should be no decentralization. He mentioned that if he got the position he will take responsibility; however, he couldn't pay since he is the purchasing agent. He recommended to the Court and that it should go back to the treasurer's department and that he was willing to help her with as much information needed.

Comr. Gutierrez motioned to approve item as submitted. Comr. Sciaraffa seconded the motion.

Motion carried 3-2 with Judge Bruni absent and Comr. Garza voting against.

Item No. 22. Discussion and possible action to adopt an "ORDER APPROVING "WEBB COUNTY, TEXAS TAX NOTES, SERIES 2006" and a paying agent/registrar agreement in connection therewith; and all matters related thereto.

Mr. Carlos Villarreal stated that the Bond Counsels were there which were Robert Tijerina and Mr. Paul Martin, to discuss the summary of competitive bids that were submitted for the financing of the Casa Ortiz.

Mr. Robert Tijerina of Estrada and Hinojosa stated that he would do a presentation on the \$1,680,000 Tax Notes Series 2006(presentation filed at county clerks office). He stated that the sources of funds and uses of funds come out to the same amount of \$1,680,000.00. He mentioned that the lowest bidder was Zions First National Bank which offered an interest rate at 3.7196% interest rate and recommended awarding bid to them. He stated that these interest rates are locked and they don't fluctuate or float.

Mr. Paul Martin stated that the Order would include all details that have been presented as far as the interest rates. Comr Gutierrez asked that if by the Court taking action and awarding Zions

National Bank the tax notes then the paying and registrar would be taken care of. Mr. Martin acknowledged.

Cmr. Gutierrez motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Sciaraffa seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 23. Discussion and possible action to approve expenditure of up to \$25,000.00 from 2006 Bond Series Capital Outlay for the County Tax Assessor-Collector's Office.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Recess

Item No. 24. Discussion and possible action to appoint a Director for the Management information systems department from among applicants, set salary therefore, and any other matters incident thereto

Cmr. Garza thanked Mr. Eddie Flores for his services on two different occasions when asked to step up as interim director. He stated that he would like to see that if Mr. Flores was not the MIS Director for him to be returned to his position.

Cmr. Sciaraffa thanked Mr. Eddie Flores for all the years of service. Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to appoint Jaime Alvarado as MIS Director and Mr. Eddie Flores as assistant. He stated that the amount budgeted should be the set salary for both. Cmr. Garza seconded the motion.

Cmr. Gutierrez thanked Mr. Eddie Flores for stepping up when asked and that she was glad that he will continue to work for the department.

Cmr. Garza mentioned that he hopes that this could set the policy for the county for when somebody is asked to step up and later does not get the position he/she should be able to step down to their old position.

Cmr. Brunner thanked Mr. Flores for all his work.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 25. Discussion with possible action to amend general order pertaining to Community Center director positions of Sta. Teresita, La Presa and Buenos Aires to reflect annual salary of \$39,600 (\$1453.85 bi-weekly now and \$1526.26 bi-weekly on April, 1, 2007).

Cmr. Gutierrez stated that during the budget all center directors were asked to have parity; however, she explained that when she saw the copy of the budget the figures did not reflect the parity that the Court asked.

Mr. Carlos Villarreal stated that being that the positions were new positions they were starting at \$35,000.00. He stated that it was based on the fact that the other individuals had been there for a longer period of time.

Cmr. Gutierrez stated that there has to be parity because it was just creating a dilemma for the directors. She stated that if there is parity for the clerks and drivers, then the directors should get parity as well. She stated that the Court does not have a set policy for new hires.

Cmr. Gutierrez motioned to approved item as submitted and get the money from payroll savings. Cmr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 28. Discussion and possible action to authorize payment for 2004 bills from previous administration, submitted by Laredo Medical Center for the amount of \$ 33,437.13. All bills totaled \$114,012.57 and will be paid at Medicaid rates. [Acct no. 001-2062-6714, Medical Services]

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Gutierrez seconded the motion with discussion.

Cmr. Gutierrez asked Major J.J. Gonzalez, Sheriff's Department, if the money would be coming out of the Sheriff Department and if the money was there.

Major J.J. Gonzalez stated yes and that the funds were there.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 29. Discussion and possible action to enter into a construction contract with CG Construction Inc., D/B/A CC Construction in the amount not to exceed THREE HUNDRED FOUR THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED SIXTY-NINE DOLLARS AND FIFTY-ONE CENTS (\$304,469.51) for the construction of a show and sale barn (approx. 19,800 sq. ft.) to be located at LIFE Downs and authorizing the County Judge to sign all relevant documents.

Item No. 30. Discussion and possible action to authorize the first six month closing extension to the Earnest Money Contract with Khaledi Properties, Inc. and send notice.

Item No. 31. Discussion and possible action to enter into a design-build construction contract with CG Construction Inc., D/B/A CC Construction in the amount not to exceed FIVE HUNDRED EIGHTY-FIVE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED TWENTY DOLLARS AND FIFTY-SEVEN CENTS (\$585,820.57) for the construction of a 3,000 sq. ft. Community Center ("La Presa Community Center") to be located on a county owned tract of land (being 37.5 acres more or less) approximately two and one-half (2 ½) mile east of the intersection of Hwy. 83 and Mangana Hein Road, Webb County, Texas, and authorizing the County Judge to sign all relevant documents. [Requested by Honorable Frank Sciaraffa, County Commissioner Precinct 1]

Comr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve items 29, 30, and 31. Comr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni not present.

Comr. Sciaraffa stated that item 31 was regarding Las Presas Community Center. Comr. Gutierrez congratulated Comr. Sciaraffa for the community center. Comr. Sciaraffa stated that people from Las Presas had been forgotten; however, he would like to thank Mr. Tomas Rodriguez and Mr. Carlos Villarreal for their hard work. Comr. Gutierrez stated that she was happy to see that they were already going into the design build contract.

**Item No. 32. Discussion and possible action to approve the following line item transfer:
FROM: 001-2503-5011 Sick Leave Buy Back \$600.00
TO: 001-2503-6202 Uniforms**

Comr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve item as submitted. Comr. Gutierrez seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 33. Discussion and possible action to authorize the submission of a contract time extension request to the Americorp*VISTA Program Project Number TX456444 for 7 months to terminate July 21, 2007 at no cost to the county.

Comr. Sciaraffa motioned to approved item as submitted. Comr. Gutierrez seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

34. Discussion and possible action to authorize the submission of a financial assistance application to the Texas Water Development Board Economically Distressed Area Program in the amount of \$4,387,695.00 to complete the Rio Bravo Water Treatment Plant Project, Phase II of the Rio Bravo Waterline Replacement and New Water Main and the Repair of Ran Damage of September 24, 2006, with no match, and to name the County Judge as the authorized representative of the County in all matters pertaining to the submission and administration of the grant

Mr. Tomas Rodriguez stated that they are working with the Economic Development Department. Comr. Sciaraffa stated that this was a brand new water line for Rio Bravo and EL Cenizo which was a \$4.3 million project.

Comr. Sciaraffa motioned to approved item as submitted. Comr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 35. Discussion and possible action to award a "Design Build Contract to Sepulveda & Associates and Leyendecker for the construction of a public youth educational and recreational facility for the Girl Scouts in the amount not to exceed \$1,050,000.00 and to authorize the County Judge to execute the contract, and any matters incident thereto.

Comr. Brunner motioned to approve item as submitted. Comr. Sciaraffa seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 36. Discussion and possible action to approve the selection of Sepulveda & Associates and Leyendecker as the best qualified Proposer in their submittal for Webb County's advertisement for "Request for Qualifications" (RFQ) for the construction of a public youth educational and recreational facility for the Girl Scouts. This is the first step of the Design Build Method pursuant to 271.119 of the Texas Local Government Code. Or, to reject the proposal and obtain the architectural services of Sepulveda & Associates to complete the design of the building and authorize the Purchasing Agent to solicit competitive sealed proposals, and any matters incident thereto.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to accept item 36. Cmr. Brunner seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 37. Discussion and possible action to approve the selection of Sepulveda & Associates and Leyendecker as the best qualified Proposer in their submittal for Webb County's advertisement for "Request for Proposals" (RFP) for the construction of a public youth educational and recreational facility for the Girl Scouts in the amount not to exceed \$1,050,000.00. This is the second step of the Design Build Method pursuant to 271.119 of the Texas Local Government Code, and any matters incident thereto.

Cmr. Brunner motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Sciaraffa seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 38. Discussion and possible action to approve the purchase of one ½ ton cargo van, one 1 ton crew cab pickup truck and three ½ ton pickup trucks for Facilities Department and to pay this expenditure of \$113,000.00 from Bond Series 2006 Capital Outlay.

Cmr. Garza motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Sciaraffa seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 39. Discussion and possible action to accept an In-Kind donation to the Webb County Head Start program on behalf of the Head Start Policy Council (Head Start parents and community representatives) in the amount of \$3,478.00.

Cmr. Garza motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Sciaraffa seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Cmr. Sciaraffa invited the Court to attend the Head Start Christmas Program on Thursday at Casa Blanca Convention Center from 10:00 – 1:00.

Item No. 40. Discussion and possible action to lease purchase one (1) digital copier from Office Communications Systems in the amount of \$339.80 monthly for the Road and Bridge Department. [ACCT: 010-7002-6014; BAL: \$4,486.76]

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Brunner seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 41. Discussion and possible action to approve the additional funding required for the Bid No. 2007-61 One 110 x 80 x 20 Metal Building for Life Downs (show and sale barn) from fund 722, Capital Outlay Series 2006 in the amount of \$54,469.30 and any other matters related thereto.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Brunner seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

42. Discussion and possible action to rescind the order of item No. 60 for Bid No. 2007-60 "Street Repairs to Centeno Street in Rio Bravo, Texas" and award to the correct vendor of Montemayor Construction for \$24,400.00 for the Engineering Department. [ACCT: 656-8001-8801-14; BAL: \$22,435.00 and ACCT: 672-8001-8801-14; BAL: \$1,965.00]

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approved item as submitted. Cmr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Mr. Eloy Ramirez advised the Court that Item No. 60 was from the last Commissioner's Court meeting on November 27, 2006.

Item No. 43. Discussion and possible action to lease purchase one (1) 35 cpm digital copier from Office Communications Systems in the amount of \$376.84 monthly and one (1) 52 cpm digital copier from Office Communications Systems in the amount of \$360.39 for the Sheriff's Department. [ACCT: 010-7002-6014; BAL: \$4,486.76]

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approved item as submitted. Cmr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 44. Discussion and possible action to purchase playground equipment for the Fred and Anita Community Center, Penitas West, in the amount of \$30,000.00 from KRAFTSMAN through the Buy board. Contract number #204-04 [Funded thru Certificate of Obligations, Series 2006]

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approved item as submitted. Cmr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

45. Discussion and possible action to rescind the previous order (item no. 49) and purchase from Rogers Dodge in the amount of \$17,824.00 through Buy Board Vehicle Contract number 208-04 for the Purchasing Department. [ACCT: 722-0600-8801; BAL: \$18,388.00]

Mr. Eloy Ramirez stated that this item was on last Commissioner's Court meeting.
Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approved item as submitted. Cmr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 46. Discussion and possible action to rescind the previous order (item no. 53) and purchase from Executive in the amount of \$15,165.15 for the Webb County Clerks office. [ACCT: 722-1120-8801; BAL: \$15,377.00]

Cmr. Gutierrez stated that this item was from the previous meeting.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approved item as submitted. Cmr. Gutierrez seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Cmr. Garza asked Mr. Eloy Ramirez why are they rescinding several items? Mr. Ramirez explained that on this particular item the previous vendor was charging an additional \$5,000.00 and the other items were just corrections.

Item No. 47. Discussion and possible action to purchase one (1) ½ ton pick up truck from Philpott Motors in the amount of \$24,500.00 through the Houston Galveston Area Council contract number VE03-06 for the Administrative Services Department: Funded through the Certificates of Obligation Series 2006.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Brunner seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 48. Discussion and possible action to purchase three (3) vehicles from Billy Jack Motors dba Caldwell Country Chevrolet in the amount of \$64,983.00 through the Houston Galveston Area Council contract number VE03-06 for the District Attorney's Office. [ACCT: 169-1100-8801; BAL: \$65,000.00]

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

49. Discussion and possible action to purchase the following equipment for the District Attorney's Office, from Fund 722 Series 2006.

QTY.	DESCRIPTION	VENDOR	AMT.
10	Computers	Lenovo	\$7,100.00
10	Software	SHI	\$4,010.00
1	Digital Copier Lease 36mo	OCS	\$5,484.00yrlly
	Buyboard Contract #231-05		

1	Photo Color Printer	Southern Comp. Whse.	\$640.83
1	3 Drawer File Cabinet	Patria	\$222.35
1	Lateral File Two Drawer	Nat.'l Business Furniture	\$778.00
		TOTAL AMT.	\$18,235.18

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approved item as submitted. Cmr. Brunner seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

**50. Discussion and possible action to award the following bids and Request for Proposals:
P-2007-03 "Hydrologic and Hydraulic Analysis/Engineering Services"**

Recommendation: Forthcoming

Bid 2007-62 "Rubber Floor Tiles"

Recommendation: "International Floorcovering of Laredo Inc.

Bid 2007-63A "Kitchen Equipment for Head Start Center"

Recommendation: Cooks Correctional Kitchen Equipment

Bid 2007-63 "Webb County Water Well Pumping Equipment"

Recommendation Forthcoming

Bid 2007-64 "Raw Water Improvements for the Water Treatment Plant at Rio Bravo, TX"

Recommendation forthcoming

6. Q-2007-01 "Design Build Girl Scouts Building"

Recommendation: Sepulveda Associates Architects

Mr. Eloy Ramirez stated that the Engineering Dept and them had the following recommendations:

He stated that on P-2007-03 they had Mejia Engineering and Morrison Engineering for Las Lomas Subdivision, for Penitas West they have Porras Engineering, and for Tanquecitos I & II and San Carlos I & II they had Gilpan Engineering Company.

Cmr. Gutierrez motioned to approve recommendations made by the Purchasing Agent.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Mr. Ramirez stated that for Bid 2007-62 they would recommend International Floor Covering of Laredo, Inc in the amount of \$87,470.30.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve the recommendation. Cmr. Brunner seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Mr. Eloy Ramirez recommended Cooks Correctional Kitchen Equipment for Bid 2007-63A in the amount of \$25, 952.85.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Mr. Ramirez stated that on Bid 2007-63 the recommendation was J and S Water Wells in the amount of \$249,000.00

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Brunner seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Mr. Ramirez stated that he recommended the Bid 2007-64 and Q-2007-01 be tabled.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to table items as recommended by the Purchasing Agent. Cmr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Mr. David Cardwell and Bobby Zuniga from the Girls Scouts thanked the Court for their support. He stated that he appreciates that the Commissioners wear their title as Commissioners first and then the title of County Commissioner of whatever Precinct second. Mr. Cardwell and Ms. Zuniga presented all Commissioners with some Certificates of Appreciation on behalf of the Girls Scouts.

Item No. 51. Discussion and possible action to authorize by Order of the Commissioners Court, payment to delinquent tax collection firm of Cavazos, Morales, Tijerina and Montemayor, L.L.P. under the terms of the tax collection agreement. [Executive Session is requested pursuant to Texas Government Code Title 5, Subchapter D, Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney).]

Mr. Nathan Bratton, County Attorney's Office, stated that it was not necessary for the Court to go into Executive Session. He stated that he had an Order that summarizes what the Court's decision of the last meeting where a formula for payment was articulated. Mr. Bratton stated that previously the Court had mentioned 36 months; however, it would only be 27.5 months and they have calculated it accordingly. He stated that the total amount owed to the attorneys was \$35,613.54. He stated that the attorneys are in agreement with the formulation.

Cmr. Sciaraffa motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Brunner seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.

Item No. 52. Adjournment

Cmr. Garza motioned to adjourn. Cmr. Gutierrez seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Judge Bruni absent.